

THE GREEN CALDRON

A Magazine of Freshman Writing



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Operation—Confusion

ANONYMOUS

Rhetoric I, Theme 11, 1945-1946

NOW IS THE TIME TO ALTER THE ARMY INTO A BETTER and more consistent organization. The first logical step in making the Army an honorable profession for persons above the status of nincompoop is to eliminate brass-hats who would feel more at home spear- ing wastepaper for the Chicago Park District. As it now stands, the Army is a refuge for befuddled, pompous old goats who can not cope with the uncertainties of civilian life. Many of the officers lounging around on the public payroll are leaders in name only; they do not know their job; they remain in positions of command until their stupidity borders on criminal negligence. Most of these Scotch-and-soda windbags are museum pieces of past wars, and their stock answer to any criticism is, "I knew the Army when things were rough; you men have it soft. . . . I remember back in 1918, etc." Many of the incumbent old "rhinos" are in charge of operations and training programs about which they know little or nothing. Owing to the reverent atmosphere surrounding many of the commissioned gold-bricks, their mental development ceased decades ago. Training programs are often inadequate and erratic because the "big dog" is better informed on poker than he is on training techniques. Some people deny that the Army needs an overhauling, but my own personal experience dictates the contrary.

For fourteen months the Army trained me to be a bomber pilot. The training was intensive and accelerated because of the need for well-trained men without delay. Everything was proceeding according to schedule until suddenly the Army forgot the "well-trained" stipulation. During my transition period from the earth to the air, I flew in Piper Cubs and primary basic trainers, and advanced trainers. Gradually and systematically I moved up into the higher horsepower brackets until I was qualified to fly a twin-engined trainer having 450 H. P. It was now that the Army threw away the recipe. After graduation in March of '44, I was sent to Tonapah, Nevada, for training as a co-pilot with a crew on a B-24 Liberator. (Because of its smooth, graceful contours the Lib is referred to as the "pregnant foot-locker.")

The Lib is powered by four 1200 H. P. Pratt and Whitney engines — that's a leap and a small jump from 450 H. P. — and of all heavy bombers the Lib is the most difficult to handle. The alleged purpose of "phase training" was to familiarize me with this heavy bomber. The flying time I compiled, the technique I acquired, and the proficiency to which I attained depended upon the first pilot, who was to teach me to fly the B-Two Dozen,

also affectionately known as the Consolidated Banana Boat.¹

Landings, take-offs, formation and instrument flying, and emergency procedure constituted the curriculum — supposedly. After three months of flying I had made one landing and two take-offs, and had flown for ten minutes in close formation, which is the key to survival in combat flying. Of actual practice in emergency procedure I had none.

Early in July of the same year, a captain took command of the crew; he allowed me to fly as pilot on two or three flights before we went overseas on July 18. Having developed nimble fingers from flipping toggle switches, and shiny breeches from 200 hours of "sand-bagging,"² I was ready for combat.

After four missions our pilot was removed from the crew and given a job as a squadron operations officer. This promotion came as the result of hard work, honest endeavor, and the kind assistance of a fraternity brother up in group headquarters. Without a pilot, it was six months before we had eleven missions behind us. All the while, I was developing sundry caluses in vulnerable places.

Then came my golden opportunity, my shining hour, my bid for glory, my chance to smear a B-24 all over the English countryside. The operations officer said to me, in meaning if not in words, "Watson, we realize that as a pilot you stink, but unless you take over we shall be forced to split up the crew and fly you as spares." Flying as a spare is a horrible fate; therefore, I graciously consented to accept this promotion to the left seat. (He immediately put away the bullwhip and threw the shackles into a footlocker.) From that day forward the good Lord assigned His most capable angel to look after the most pitiful pilot in the Eighth Airforce.

The only noteworthy event during my brief transition period came when I blissfully tried to land in a snowdrift. Not much damage was done to the plane; but the colonel informed me, "We are here to bomb the enemy; we are not conducting a transition school for co-pilots!" I agreed — no argument on that score.

When I became chief throttle-jockey of our airborne boxcar, I was drunk with power and determined to make my guardian angel earn his flying pay; I amassed a record of terrifying "firsts." My first experience with prolonged formation flying came on my first combat mission. My first pre-dawn take-off in a Lib took place with a full load of gas, bombs, guns, and ammunition. My first night-landing came after an eight-hour mission in rain and fog. My formal introduction to the intricacies of instrument flying

¹ The Lib is a very fine aircraft,
A stratosphere bathtub no less,
It never bothers the target,
But for ten miles around what a mess!
(Tune: My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean)

² Going along for the ride; not logging any pilot time.

occurred in the worst weather England had seen in years; on one mission we logged five hours of actual instrument time in snow, rain, and icing conditions. "Emergency procedure" meant nothing to me until two engines on one side cut out simultaneously over the German lines.

As if my inexperience were not enough of an obstacle, our group was plagued by commanding officers of dog-catcher caliber. The first C. O. had done most of his flying back in the Middle Ages — the early thirties, that is. He was suffering from the illusion that aviation had not changed since then. Our second colonel came to us from a photo-reconnaissance group and knew nothing of the deep dark secrets of heavy bombardment, and he didn't care to learn. He, too, had pet theories which went out with the barnstorming pilot of the late twenties. Throughout the confusion of parading commanding officers through the post, the group operations officer was valiantly trying to manage the bomb group exactly as he managed his barber shop back in Racine. The tonsorial expert was eventually sheared of his powers but not until he had succeeded in winning the D. F. C. for leading the group over avoidable flak. His successor was an energetic young politician, whose claim to fame rested on his ability and willingness to consume two breakfasts in order to be with the colonel.

It is possible that our base was an exception; perhaps gross negligence in choosing leaders was not prevalent throughout the Army; however, if such incompetence existed in the most technical branch of the Army, I cringe at the possibilities in other branches.

The Army system, as it stands today, breeds lethargy and deadens initiative. Promotion, too often, is only for the obsequious politician. High-ranking officers who are unqualified for leadership are merely rearranged rather than removed.

General Doolittle's committee has made a step in the right direction, but until the Army is made an honorable profession worthy of patronage, by the placing of qualified and efficient men at the head of an efficient organization, the incongruous old Army system will continue indefinitely.

War and a Boy

One Sunday evening, I was swimming in a hotel pool. Bleary-eyed, I arrived home in time for dinner. As I entered the house, I sensed something wrong. My mother was weeping; my uncle was swearing; and I stood dumbfounded. As I glanced upon the wall I noticed the time and date — 5:05, December 7, 1941. They told me it was war! Of course I had read about wars in school, had learned of tyrants and heroes, had even been forewarned that another war might occur. Yet, to me, it was still just a word in *Webster's Dictionary*, and, in a great part, I imagine it still is. Boys, but a little older than myself, were going off to war, some of them never again to see the homes they had left. I spent a sleepless night dwelling upon my future. Was I, too, to go off to war? What was war? I awoke the following morning worried and undecided. What was it all about?

— STEPHEN J. HONET

Joe Bruggs—Graduate

ANONYMOUS

Rhetoric I, Theme 3, 1945-1946

IT WAS HALF-PAST-FIVE ALREADY, AND JOE BRUGGS WAS driving his bicycle home like mad. I'll bet Mom will be in a tizzy because I'm late again, he was thinking. And I can just hear Pop saying: "Today, of all days, son — your graduation day — you could have been on time for dinner." With Pop it was always "today, of all days." If it wasn't Rotary meeting night, it was bridge with Mom at the Stipes. Always something. And Beth, the kid sister, will probably give me the X-ray eye as soon as I walk in. As sure as God made green apples she'll find something to criticize. Lucky thing I remembered to get my hair cut this afternoon. Why do they keep treating me like a kid? Don't they realize a guy seventeen has to get out with the fella's once in a while. Now, take Nick Chappers' folks. They never bothered about him. Geez, he could keep his own hours; came and went as he pleased. I'll bet his folks wouldn't miss him if he went away for a whole week.

As he pedaled, Joe kept swallowing air by the mouthful, and exhaling it through his teeth. Already his esophagus felt like a peanut whistle, and his tongue like burnt cork. But some time ago Joe discovered that his mother had a dual sense of smell: one like all other people's and a second one for the sole purpose of detecting cigarette smell. So what if I did smoke a few cigarettes in Rocky Dobbs' garage. For Pete's sake, it was embarrassing for a guy to have to admit he still had to *sneak* a drag. Cripes, do they want a giant in the house? I'm 5' 9" now. Just gotta get a job this summer, and then I can assert myself in that house. That's it! A job would really do the trick. That would open their eyes and make them see me as a man.

Joe wheezed his way down the driveway into the back yard. Gotta keep on the ball now. Maybe even apologize to them, and be extra nice to Beth. Can't risk not using the car for prom night, day after tomorrow. Yipes, not that. Not after the terrific plans I made with Rocky for that night. It was the car that cinched his date with Peggy MacGregor, and didn't the lads envy him for that. Yep, he'd act just like a lamb when they bawled him out now.

As he entered through the kitchen, he noted happily that they wouldn't have much time for lecturing, as the clock pointed to 5:50 and he had to be at the school by seven. Strangely, his family greeted him like a loving son and brother. No reprimands, no digs from Beth, no nothing. Ah! so they've decided to be psychological with me. As if I can't see through it all. But this suits me just fine. Have to hand it to them though; they sure can put on an

act. Pop talking to me man to man, like I was a business associate or something; Mom, all dressed up and beaming like she was chosen to be queen for a day; and Beth looking as though Mr. Anthony had just solved all her problems. Anyway, the dinner is super. Roast beef with mountains of mashed potatoes, and my favorite dessert, strawberry shortcake. Boy, my Mom is the best cook in the world.

* * * *

After dinner a quick shower. First a shave, but might as well let the shower run so they won't hear the electric Schick downstairs. They still don't understand about this shaving business. Even Beth, with her X-ray eyes, won't admit that there is a stubble. Whatta life.

Mom has all my clothes laid out. My new gray herringbone with the semi-drape; the loud tie I picked out by myself; and the latest in Scotch-grained shoes. Hmm! clothes certainly make the man. Mom comes in as usual to inspect and correct. She straightens my tie, tugs at my coat, and looks at my fingernails. Beth enters with a bottle of smelly stuff. But, nix, that's where I draw the line. Women! Sometimes they're an awful nuisance.

Pop drives me to the school, which is only seven blocks from home. The exercises don't begin until eight, so he'll go back to get Mom and Beth, and they'll return later. We pick up Flash Buckles on the way, just like I promised him. He gets in and right away I know that his sister won out, because he smells like Woolworth's perfume counter on a humid day. I edge up closer to Dad because that stuff is contagious, and I don't want to be razzed. Maybe Flash should have sat in the back seat.

When we get to the school most of the fella's are there already. They all look different somehow. We all try to appear casual in our unaccustomed get-ups. Not one will admit that he is excited. We goof around the halls for awhile and whistle after some of the girls going upstairs. They look silly in their high heels, especially Maisie Nielson with her piano legs. Miss Brook, our math teacher, calls for us to come upstairs. She helps us with our graduation robes and gives us last minute instructions. I'm glad it's Miss Brook, because she's a good Joe. I'll never forget how she let me retake my math final so I wouldn't flunk out.

At eight sharp we march down the middle aisle of the auditorium, while the school orchestra plays "Pomp and Circumstance." I feel like a freak, and all I can think of is: Why don't they open some windows!

As soon as I take my seat on the stage I spot my family up front in the audience. Aunt Mary and Uncle Ben are with them. They're sitting up poker straight and everybody looks so serious. Like dead pans. Even jolly, round Uncle Ben. Say, he'll be good for at least ten bucks tonight. Maybe even twenty. But the program begins.

More music. I can't keep my eyes off Fats Thompson sweating over the

details
typical

1st
person

present
tense

bass fiddle. The invocation. A speech by the mayor. Then Anita Cranmer, the class valedictorian, gives out. I almost have her speech memorized myself from all the rehearsals. Boy, she's a spook. Straight A student, but still a spook. Wonder if anyone is taking her to the prom?

It seems that a century passes while I sit listening to speeches. That President Wilson who delivers that boring, long-winded baccalaureate sermon sure doesn't do his college much good. I feel the Vitalis melting all over my scalp, and I want to take off my tasseled cap and scratch my head. This is enough to drive a guy bugs. Rocky Dobbs in front of me makes creaky sounds on his chair every time he recrosses his legs. Nick Chappers is having one time trying to keep awake. His head keeps jerking 'til I think it will fall off his neck. To the right. I notice that Maisie Nielson has slipped off her shoes. Wouldn't it be funny if she couldn't get them on again in time and had to walk across the stage in her stocking feet? There's Peggy. Gosh, how does she manage that cool-as-a-cucumber look? Boy, I'm a lucky guy. She's the best looker in the class.

Suddenly, a slight commotion, throats being cleared. Those called go forth to receive their diplomas. Joseph Bruggs. Hey, that's me. I get up feeling like a dead tree trunk, but I make my way across the stage and my voice sounds clear when I thank Principal Watkins while he shakes my hand and hands me the scroll. It feels pretty good in my hands. I feel kinda strange. Sorta half glad and half sad.

Then it's all over. Everyone rises and we sing the school song. I don't know whether I'm relieved it's all over, or whether some parts of the speeches soaked in, but I sing the old "Purple and Gold" like crazy. I have to admit, it was a swell four years.

My folks meet me at the exit. All the parents seem to be talking at once. Congratulations fly all over the place. I want to wash the sticky lipstick off my face. In the confusion Mom hands me a gift box. The niftiest flat, gold pocket watch with chain, inscribed "To Joe, from Mom and Dad, 6/15/44." Beth gives me just the identification bracelet I'd been hankering for. And Uncle Ben really comes across.

Pop says: "The house is yours, Joe, so invite your friends over. Mom has the icebox jam full, and Beth has borrowed all the latest jive records we don't have at the house. The old folks will stay out of your way." Whatta family. Whatta doggone swell family I got.

Hobo vs. Tramp

A hobo is not to be confused with a tramp. A tramp is a hobo fallen from grace; he is beyond the pale of hobo society and society in general. The tramp will stoop to skulduggery that definitely is not genteel. To a hobo the line between genteel and general skulduggery is clearly defined. Indeed, any hobo is indignant if he is called a tramp, for the tramp is the criminal of the hobo world.

— ARTHUR RADZIEWICZ

The Massacre of St. Bartholomew

BARBARA LONG

Rhetoric II, Theme 7, 1945-1946

AUGUST OF 1572 WAS TO BE A MONTH OF CELEBRATION for the people of France. The years of religious strife and conflict were seemingly at an end; for the King, Charles IX, and Admiral Coligny, leader of the Huguenots, had become reconciled. Paris was preparing for a week of festivity. The King's sister, Margaret, was to be married to Henry, King of Navarre and another Protestant leader, on August 18. The wedding was to be followed by days of feasting, and from all parts of the country Catholics and Huguenots alike had been invited. Then, too, the Feast of St. Bartholomew was to be celebrated on August 24.¹

There were some in the city, however, who were in no mood for merry-making. Foremost among them were the Queen-mother, Catherine de Medici and her follower, the Duke of Guise. For years Catherine had striven to be the *de facto* ruler of France. After the death of her husband and during the reigns of two of her sons, she had had an incessant struggle with numerous factions for supreme executive power. When, at last, her third son, Charles, ascended the throne, Catherine believed that the power was in her grasp; for Charles was easily swayed and should be readily molded to her views. But the vacillating Charles was also influenced by the strong and fervent Coligny. Although fearing for her own supremacy, Catherine did not object to the accord between the King and Coligny as long as it did not conflict with her plans. When, however, upon her return after a short absence from the country, she found that Coligny had prevailed upon Charles to declare war on Spain, she decided that it would be necessary to suppress the growing power of the Huguenots or face the absolute ruin of her family.²

Charles at first refused to listen to Catherine's harangue on the dangers which threatened him from within and without, and, which, according to her and her leaders, could be averted only by Coligny's death; but he was finally persuaded and gave the order that Coligny be shot.³

On August 22 Coligny was fired upon and wounded, though not fatally. The Huguenot leaders were furious and clamored for vengeance. Catherine, now thoroughly frightened, hastily called a council at which it was decided to kill all the Huguenot chiefs except Henry of Navarre.⁴

¹ *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. 3, p. 19.

² R. Chambers, *The Book of Days*, Vol. 2, p. 261.

³ Maurice Wilkinson, "The Problem of St. Bartholomew's Massacre," *Dublin Review*, 174 (April-June, 1924), 202.

⁴ *Cambridge Modern History*, loc. cit.

Early in the morning of August 24 as the bells of Paris began to ring for the Feast of St. Bartholomew, armed bands of Catherine's leaders began the massacre. As the houses containing the Huguenots had been marked during the night with white crosses, the affair proceeded swiftly. The authorities, who had been warned, made no attempt to intervene, and the Paris mob needed little encouragement to lend its aid to the slaughter.⁵ One party led by the Duke of Guise went at once to Admiral Coligny's house. The Admiral offered no resistance, and in a short time his body, horribly mutilated and hardly recognizable, was thrown down to the Duke of Guise, who stood waiting in the court yard. The blood was wiped from the face of the corpse, and Guise, picking at the body, said, "Yes, it is he; I know him well."⁶

Catherine's aim had been accomplished; but now the mob was in a wild frenzy, and the massacre soon exceeded the bounds upon which she and Charles had calculated. It became a wholesale butcher of Catholic and Protestant alike. Five hundred men of rank, many women of high birth, and many members of the clergy were murdered; and, as if the crazed people needed more excitement, the military director, Marshal Tavannes, rode through the streets with a dripping sword crying, "Kill! kill! Bloodletting is as good in August as in May."⁷

The streets were filled with heaps of naked, bleeding corpses, and cart-loads of bodies were conveyed to the Seine. The living were tied hand and foot and thrown off the bridge. Even the children were victims. An infant, as yet unable to walk, was dragged through the streets by a cord tied about his neck. One man boasted of killing four thousand with his own hands.⁸

These ghastly killings continued for two days, and similar massacres occurred at Meaux, Orleans, Troyes, Rouen, Lyons, and Toulouse.⁹ After the final outbreak at Bordeaux, which happened several weeks later in October, it was estimated that over fifty thousand people had been killed.¹⁰

For a short time the massacre was considered to have been necessary in order to bring peace to France through the destruction of Protestantism. The court won the congratulations of other Catholic countries, and Pope Gregory XIII celebrated it by striking a medal.¹¹ Soon, however, it was recognized that Catherine's policy of "self interest of princes" rather than religious discord had been the primary cause of the massacre, and all Europe

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁶ Henry White, *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, 1572, Preceded by a History of the Religious Wars of the Reign of Charles IX*, p. 409.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 417.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 425.

⁹ Arthur Tilley, *The French Wars of Religion*, p. 30.

¹⁰ *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 10, p. 193.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

was shocked.¹² Had Milton lived a hundred years earlier, no doubt he would have written, "Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints . . ." ¹³ to express horrified public opinion. Charles became remorseful and filled with horror. To his surgeon he confided, "I feel like one in a fever, my body and mind are both disturbed; every moment whether asleep or awake, visions of murdered corpses, covered with blood and hideous to the sight haunt me."¹⁴

Today the massacre is looked upon not only as an obviously wicked deed, but also as a great blunder; for, justified or not, it has been a theme of reproach against Catholics ever since.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 193.

¹³ John Milton, "Sonnet on the Late Massacre in Piedmont."

¹⁴ Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

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In the Still of the Night

Big Sand Lake lay motionless before me. Only the bobbing of a shadowy raft rose from the dark lake to break its smooth, level surface. Rippleless, waveless, the lake was asleep. A quarter moon reflected pale silver light to the edge of the shore. The glittering lane of water, surrounded by vague darkness, made me think I could walk up to the edge of the shore, tiptoe lightly up the shiny path, and sit on an end of the crescent-shaped moon.

Sand, cooled by the night's moderate temperature, bordered the lake. I felt the damp, fine grains push between my toes and thought how the same sand, hot and fiery, had almost burned the soles of my feet that afternoon. I dug my feet deeper into its moistness.

Suddenly I wanted to laugh. That I was looking at water at two o'clock in the morning was really funny. I stuffed a handkerchief into my mouth and choked down a giggle. Big Sand Lake was still very quiet. — JANE MICHIEL

Homecoming

CHARLES LESSING

Rhetoric I, Theme 1, 1945-1946

Tim
hans
 OURS HAD BEEN A FAST AND UNEVENTFUL CROSSING. Eleven days before, we had boarded the navy transport *General Heintzelman* at Yokohama — needless to say, without misgiving — and now we were within sight of land for the first time since then. Very low on the horizon we could see a dark blue streak, broken here and there by valleys or low-lying clouds.

Some of our fellow passengers had been waiting more than three years for the sight. Now they crowded the decks and found new fuel to light the excitement in their eyes, excitement that seemed to overflow and infect all those on deck. The energy thus created was expended in various ways. Some of the more boisterous men danced a little jig and then hurried from passenger to passenger, clapping each on the back and shouting the good news that somewhere beyond that blue streak was home. The more inhibited watchers just stood with hands in pockets, grinning. There was nothing for them to say that would have been appropriate. Others stared and at intervals muttered some audible ejaculation that broke from their silent thoughts. Soon all were quiet, dreaming again the things they had all dreamed so frequently during the last several months of expectant waiting.

The weather was clear and bracing. For most of the voyage it had been cold and dismal; a light snow had fallen on two consecutive days. Today the weather was cooperating with other events to add pleasure to our homecoming. The sun was bright, the wind low, and the air just chill enough to be refreshing.

Gradually the dark blue streak grew in the water and turned green. Soon we could pick out mountain ranges, their highest peaks capped with snow. Several islands glided past, and about one o'clock we entered the mouth of Puget Sound.

The mountains had opened up here to let us through. Their lower slopes stood bright and warm in the sun, clothed in green for the most part, but here and there fringed with brown. Then came the welcoming seagulls. They approached in their characteristic long, level glide, turned back at the stern, and kept a constant air patrol over us until nightfall.

Darkness closed in quickly in the Sound, and with it came fog. Up ahead we saw a dim glow from the lights of Seattle, but now everyone was too tired and cold to show any excitement. The fog closed in, but the glow ahead grew brighter and larger.

We must have rounded a bend or passed an island, because suddenly we

could see the lights in Seattle, mistily encircled with halos. One entire hillside seemed sprinkled with lights. As we drew nearer they assumed a more orderly design, and we could trace streets as they marched up one ridge, dipped, and reappeared on the next. Then we could distinguish between signs on the water front. Dominating the harbor was an enormous red neon sign advertising Magnolia gasoline and oil. There was no mistaking it — this was the United States.

Before daylight we were again on deck to watch the sun rise over the mountains. The morning, however, turned out shrouded in foggy silence. All the usual noise and bustle of a busy harbor was muted, and the night gave way to a timid daylight.

The city slumped on its hillsides and was a disappointment. Two tugs chugged slowly alongside our tall ship and began nudging us toward the docks. Two trucks marked "American Red Cross" huddled alongside the dock shed, and several portly ladies wearing Red Cross armbands waved gaily as we pulled in to tie up.

At the other end of the dock stood a long line of olive-drab trucks, their exhausts breathing light wispy steam, waiting to start us on the second leg of our journey toward home. The first gangplank hit the dock and was immediately filled with a line of debarking soldiers, all much more sober than they had been the day before. This was old stuff to them — they had walked off ships before. Not a single one of them stooped to kiss the good earth as some had done elsewhere. They were glad to be back, but this wasn't "home" yet. They were eager to climb into one of those trucks and get started. The sooner, the better.

Post-War Retrospect

JAMES F. KESSLER

Rhetoric I, Theme A, 1945-1946

IF THE FOLLOWING FEW WORDS WILL BE OF USE TO anyone about to enter one of the branches of service, then I shall be glad to have written them; for anything written in vain is like a radio playing in an empty room. Entrance into, and life in, the service is unique to say the least. With that statement I can safely estimate that ninety-five percent of all servicemen both active and released will agree.

However, to come to the point and to give the reader a few pertinent facts, let me start by saying that I was selected by some of my neighbors, much against my will and probably theirs, to leave a well-organized life and embark upon a year's military life. This took place in 1941, *ante bellum*.

And at that time my first impression of the Army was something like this: "The big shots in Washington have to make a showing, so here I am. Who selected the characters to operate this clambake in the first place? How can I expect to get anything from a life like this? Might as well resign myself to a blank space in my life known as 'The Army.'" These thoughts were kept active and even strengthened by the men around me. As a matter of fact, to show the state into which my mind had wandered, I volunteered for overseas service; and, as stated previously, that was before World War II had shaken the world.

There was a certain psychological effect in volunteering as I did. Although the Army had predetermined a year of my life, I attempted while in the Army to predetermine the rest of my life. In other words, I asked for it and so could do no complaining. And, strange as it may seem, I found less to complain about. Friends seemed closer; I made new and lasting friendships. Senses of value changed. I looked forward to smaller things and was content with them; a couple of letters from home, a new moving picture, the satisfaction of washing my own clothes — these things made me realize what I had to do to remain stable while away from home and overseas. What else *could* I do about it?

The one thought that overshadowed all others was that this could not last forever and that some day we would return to that so-called organized life we had left. I reserved a certain portion of my mind for civilian thoughts and ideas. Knowing that Army life definitely was not my forte, I devised this scheme with the thought that should I ever return to civilian life, that was the portion of my brain which would carry me through the readjustment period; and the "Army" portion of my brain would be relegated to an inactive status with no trouble at all, gradually to be outweighed by the ever-growing "civilian" portion. Probably an unorthodox method, which, nevertheless, is working admirably.

To return to some facts, what I prefer to call the intermediate stage of my Army career ended simultaneously with the ending of hostilities in Europe. I had tried to shape my destiny, and now the time for which I had planned was here. Once the fact of release dawned on me, I had to settle a mental conflict: the relative security of life in the Army vied with complete independence and its attendant problems. I decided I had had enough of Army security.

So, after seemingly endless orientation, processing, inspecting, and signing papers I found myself a civilian faced with the problem of what to do with myself. Actually it turned out to be not so much a problem of what to do with myself as of how to carry out what I had already set for myself to do. There was, and still is, the problem of thinking for myself; the realization of being completely independent is quite gigantic.

I believe that now I have a proper perspective on my Army life: the

service has left me both benefits and disadvantages. For instance, as far as health is concerned I have certainly gained much, and I am referring to things other than weight. My ability to accept and make the most of different situations has increased. On the other hand, there is the fact that manners and social graces grow lax under Army surveillance. Speech is reduced to its simplest form in the Army, a form of which I do not approve for civilian conversation. I have to weigh these and other factors to derive full value from them.

Release from the Army has made me realize that any one of the services can improve one's health and give him friends, memories, and unusual experiences. Such things will last a lifetime.

Paris, August 23, 1944

ARTHUR R. GOTTSCHALK

Rhetoric II, Theme 11, 1945-1946

JOE BAXLEY AND I WERE COVERED WITH NORMANDY dirt and laden with a two weeks' growth of beard in addition to the traditional M-1 rifles, steel helmets, foul-smelling gas-impregnated fatigues, and other G.I. accessories. Further, one could detect a strong scent of cognac surrounding us if he so desired. No one so desired. A strong scent of cognac surrounded everyone, and everyone was seeking a scent of champagne.

We were tired of being kissed by aged men and wet babies. We were weary with the stories of the "misunderstood" French collaborators who sought protection. We were apprehensive about French souvenir hunters seeking anything in our possession. We no longer cared about patting the backs of the well-meaning members of the F.F.I. and having them pat ours. We desired women and drink, and we hunted for a quiet cafe.

Our journey led us through narrow, winding cobblestone alleys bedecked with bunting and populace. Surging crowds snatched at us, beamed at us, and shouted *Vive l'Amerique* at us. Hands congratulated us, extended to us, enveloped us. We were made welcome in the Parisian fashion.

Down the cheering *Poulevard Maudslaine*, down the crowd-filled *Champs Elysees*, past the famous *Arc de Triomphe* stumbled Baxley and I, two Americans in search of some compensation for the murderous hedgerows of Normandy.

Champagne flowed at every street corner. Water glasses filled with sticky red liquor were downed in toasts to Roosevelt, Churchill, De Gaulle, and Stalin — then to France, the F.F.I., the Fourth Division, the English, New

York City, and as many United Nations as any particular crowd could remember. Baxley and I kept remembering fewer and fewer nations as the evening wore on, then fewer and fewer leaders. Later we just cheered and drank to anything anyone said.

We forgot about women; we forgot about quiet cafes. We didn't even mind being kissed by old men and wet babies. Baxley rather enjoyed it and became so jubilant that, at one point, he kissed several of them back. I was too occupied at giving shrill night-piercing whoops to realize how ridiculous he looked.

Suddenly it was dawn, and I had a headache. Baxley had disappeared. I wondered how I got on the steps of the *Place de l'Opera*. I faintly recalled imitating Caruso to the accompaniment of an urging mob. I wondered if my outfit had moved out of its bivouac area; I began walking down empty, littered streets. So this was Paris! I wondered what lay ahead.

Fighter Sweep

ADDISON GOODELL

Rhetoric I, Theme 3, 1945-1946

AND IT CAME TO PASS THAT BEFORE THE SUN WAS risen, the night orderly went forth out of his place to the abode of the birdmen and roused them each in turn.

And he said, "'Tis the fourth hour and briefing comes before the dawn." And he retreated in haste, for he was wise in the ways of the birdmen.

And the birdmen cursed him loud and long, for his tidings were of no great joy.

For the sweep was to come they knew, and only the keen were glad. And the keen were few. And the keen grew fewer at the fourth hour of the day.

And there was much wailing and gnashing of teeth and great unhappiness in that place. But a fear for their commissions was in them. And they went.

And as they went, there came unto them he of the great intellect who is the I.O., who was known by other names also.

And one of the birdmen said unto him, "What is this thou hast done unto me? Wherefore hast thou beguiled me?"

And the I.O. said, "Thus it is done in our country." And holding up a ribbon of blue and of gold, he spake, "Fulfill this week and we will give thee this, also for the service which thou shalt serve with us another seven years."

But the birdmen departed saying, "What manner of poppycock is this whereof he speaketh? The law of averages getteth us all in the end. So be it."

"Verily, verily," said the others, "amen."

For they were not happy in the service that day and the pouches of their eyes gave witness.

And they went into the Holy of Holies which is called the Briefing Room.

And as they entered therein, each in his turn looked upon the writing on the wall, for such it was. And after each had looked at the lines thereon, they said one to the other, "This cannot be." But soon one came among them known as Graywall, who said, "It is so." And all was quiet as the tomb of the prophet.

And he gathered his flock unto his bosom and spake earnestly of course and of E.T.R. And they comprehended him not. But he was wise and comprehended for them all.

Then he pointed to the map and said, "Behold this Alpine heap and this pillar, and be witness that I shall not pass over this heap lest the petrol giveth out. For the Air-Sea-Rescue maketh not light of early reveille. And the Forts must be shepherded by our birds."

And all that were there concurred saying, "Verily, it is so."

And then Graywall sent messengers before him to his brother Prune in the land of the R.A.F.

"Forsooth," said he, "the Spits will be welcome ere the sun setteth this day." And it came to pass that he knew whereof he spake.

And Graywall said unto them, "Begone, for the hour of pressing draws near." And thus they went to the jeeps and the jeeps to the dispersal.

And the head birdman chose his flock for the day, and some he husbanded for yet another day. And some whom he left behind secretly rejoiced and praised the Lord. And those that went forth were called one's and two's and were given colors for each to know the other. And number one shared his jamoca with number two saying, "The Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from the other." And thus they drank saying, "Cheers," one to the other.

And it came to pass that each of the birdmen went forth to his bird and was amazed at what was contained therein. But at the hour of pressing, each of the warbirds drew the breath of life and thundered forth in power and majesty—save one which went not. And that birdman then beat his bird with his hands and kicked it with his feet, but it went not. Thus he stayed home and wrote the necessary form.

But all else went to the proper place to fly away, and he of the checkered flag sent them off. And all flew off save for one who pranged for lack of revs.

"Woe betide him who prangeth," saith the prophet, "for he curseth him-

self and his children and his children's children."

And the birds went on their journey and came to the land of the people of the caste, and all was serene. And he who was known as Tablet spake to Graywall of ten plus and twenty plus. But the others attended him not, believing he spake of the balloon barrage, and he clucked to himself.

And it came to pass that the Forts were clobbered beyond the heap, as was the custom in those days. But all was serene with our birdmen.

And someone said, "Thou hast a Focke-Wolfe on thy tail." And each of the birdmen went this way and that way to see whereof he spake and each was lost unto the others. And one said, "Where art thou, Blue Two?" And the other replied, "Lo, I spin out and am lost unto thee." And another said, "Wither goest thou, Red One?" And the Red One answered, "Home, for my cockpit hath smoke." And yet another spake of homings.

And Graywall said, "Where be ye? For the time cometh that the big friends (for as such they were known in those days) be gathered together and shepherded to the waters." But the others heard him not, or heeded him not, for each thought only of getting out of that place.

And they went home by divers routes, each roosting in his own good time.

And again they gathered unto the Holy of Holies, where Graywall told them of the evil that had been done.

And he gave them hell in general.

The Mechanic

where is author

VICTOR B. ROBIN

Rhetoric I, Theme 1, 1945-1946

A BLINDING, WHITE-HOT SUN BEAT DOWN ON THE coral airstrip. Shimmering heat waves rose irregularly and formed little mirage-lakes. From across the strip came the purr of a truck or jeep hurrying home. The strip itself was quiet; the only moving thing on it was the figure of a man on top of the wing of an airplane.

He knelt on the cowlings atop the engine with his head and shoulders buried in the accessory section behind the engine. Small twitching movements of his body were accompanied by sounds of metal on metal and a steady stream of profanity. It was monotonous profanity with undertones of sincerity. It was the swearing of a man familiar with swearing, who found that it best expressed his feelings, a man who knows that no one is listening and is angry at the thought. It was the profanity of a man resentful of being alone, resentful of having to work, resentful of having to work alone in the

heat. It was an outlet for a man provoked and angered by close quarters, sweat in his eyes, slippery tools, bruised knuckles, and his other aches and pains. Only once the noise stopped; then one hand came out of the engine, and coaxed and coached by a few grunts, found a new tool and returned to work.

At last the man stopped work, pulled himself out of the engine, replaced the cowling, gathered up his tools, let himself down off the wing, put the tools in a toolbox, and then paused to wipe the sweat out of his eyes.

On the ground next to the toolbox lay a pair of neatly folded army pants; on top of the pants lay an army towel; on top of the towel lay a letter, a watch, a pack of cigarettes, and some matches. The man took one of the cigarettes, lit it, and let it dangle from a corner of his mouth while he read the letter. Apparently he had read it before, because he skipped the first page and smiled while he read something on the bottom of the second page. Then he refolded the letter and put it back on top of the towel.

He stood there under the wing looking out over the ocean. He had short blond hair, which had been bleached out by the sun, and he was burned the color of shoe leather. He wore a peaked cap, shorts, light-weight moccasins, and a pair of sun glasses. Only the army pants and airplane served as clues that would identify him as a soldier.

When he finished the cigarette, he picked it apart and scattered it on the coral under foot, grinding the lighted part under his shoe. Then he put the watch and cigarettes in the toolbox, tucked the letter in a pants pocket, and spread the pants and towel on a carefully chosen spot under the airplane. He selected the best looking spot and carefully felt for all the lumps of coral that stuck up through the cloth, casting them aside one by one as he found them. When he had spread the cloth to his satisfaction, he took off the sun glasses, pulled the peaked cap down over his eyes, lay down and went to sleep.

The airplane and the crew assigned to it were going to fly a mission in a few short hours — a mission from which they might not return; but he had nothing to do with that. When they took off from the strip, that plane would be in the best mechanical condition possible. His work was finished. He slept soundly.

Mrs. Sword-tail and Her Progeny

One day Mrs. Sword-tail surprised everyone by producing one hundred and fifty little Sword-tails. I had always supposed, though I had never thought much about it, that fish might have twins or triplets, or even eight or nine as dogs do, but this event completely floored me. Little did I know about the family life of Sword-tails, for no sooner was her family complete than it started to disappear. Apparently she agreed with me that triplets were enough, because three is the number she left. At least she wasn't selfish about it; she invited the neighbors in and they all had a feast. — GEORGE L. CLARK

Twenty Million Painted Dreams

MONA LEE KESSLER

Rhetoric II, Theme 12, 1945-1946

AT ANY GIVEN TIME OF THE DAY AT LEAST TWO MILLION American housewives are listening to a soap opera.¹ Although these universally popular dramatic serials have a daily listening audience of over twenty million women, little thought is ever given to the industry necessary to produce the hundreds of daily serials that are broadcast over nation-wide hookups.² Yet, the soap opera programs constitute the largest and costliest assembly-line production of entertainment in the radio industry. NBC and CBS have estimated their combined incomes from the sale of air time for soap operas at thirty million dollars annually — far more than any other type of program brings in.³ One soap manufacturer sponsors sixteen serial stories at an estimated annual cost of fifteen million dollars.⁴ These are fabulous figures, but they are not as fabulous, relatively speaking, as the figures concerned with the actual production of a soap opera.

The majority of the shows are created, written, and produced by advertising agencies and then presented to the broadcaster for network production. One of the largest agencies is that of Blackett-Sample-Hummert. In their offices on Park Avenue, or at their home in Greenwich, Connecticut, Frank and Anne Hummert produce sixty-seven radio shows per week, sixty of which are soap operas — sixty soap operas at the rate of twelve per day, five days per week! The Hummerts dream up and dictate a "story line" for each show, defining the plot and suggesting appropriate dialogue and characterization. For instance, this is a story line for a recent half-hour episode of "Mr. Keen":

Scene one opens with the nice old lady, sweet, dear, and lovable . . . coming to see Mr. Keen and telling him that her husband has disappeared. . . . Mr. Keen asks if her husband had any enemies or any reasons for disappearing. She says no. He asks if she thinks . . . he might be dead — as she said he wasn't feeling well. She says that she feels that he's alive and Mr. Keen can find him. . . . In scene two we show the little old lady and her accomplice had done away with the husband. . . .

This story line, or skeleton, goes to a subsidiary Hummert organization, Air Features Incorporated, where a staff of twelve extremely anonymous writers, six women and six men, grind out the actual dialogue. These writers, whose job it is to pad and develop the pre-written story line, are

¹ J. K. Hutchens, "Are Soap Operas Only Suds?" *New York Times Magazine*, March 28, 1943, p. 19.

² "Daytime Classics," *Time*, 40 (November 30, 1942), 45.

³ Hutchens, *loc. cit.*

⁴ "Story of Mary Marlin." *Life*, 17 (September 11, 1944), 67.

paid from one hundred and twenty-five to two hundred dollars a week per soap opera. After Air Features Incorporated has developed the story line into a complete story, the finished product is sent back to the Hummerts for a final check. After this final check the story is returned to Air Features, where it is cast and made ready for production.

To the layman it might seem that the most difficult problem mass-production writers have to face is that of variety and originality. One would think that they would run the gamut of ideas within a few months. But getting new and different ideas seems to be the least of the script writers' worries. Soap-opera writing has other problems, peculiar to the trade. Finding names for hundreds of characters is one really troublesome task. Frank Hummert says that he has given up trying to create names. When he needs a few new ones, he just goes for a walk and copies some from shop signs. The Hummerts also have a great deal of trouble keeping the dialogue of their shows fresh. Script writers don't seem to last long under the strain of mass-production creation, and inevitably they fall into a rut of clichés and colloquialisms. One writer who lasted for seven years set the all-time endurance high for Hummert employees. Since one of the most appetizing aspects of the soap operas is the suspense created, the biggest problem the writers must face is that of keeping the stories from ending. They can't afford to sap a story of its interest by too serious a climax. They must keep the story going!⁵

Not all soap operas are production made, however. "The Goldbergs," for instance, is written, produced, and directed by one person — Mrs. Berg. For most of the last fourteen years, Mrs. Berg, wife of a consultant on sugar technology and mother of two children, has ground out her soapy, five-times-a-week masterwork for Proctor and Gamble to the tune of five thousand dollars a week. Besides writing, directing, and producing the show, Mrs. Berg plays the leading role, that of Molly Goldberg. She has written three thousand six hundred and forty scripts (about six million words) for "The Goldbergs." This sounds like a great deal of work, but it hasn't been all in vain, for now, at the age of forty-two, Mrs. Berg is a millionaire. She has a ten-room duplex in Manhattan and an estate in Bedford Hills, New York. The Princeton University Library has asked Mrs. Berg to send it scripts of her show to keep as permanent references of one of the best serials now being broadcast. Since radio scripts are mimeographed, and a collection of these daily scripts would soon cause the archives to overflow, it is hoped that one representative script per week will serve the purpose.⁶

There are many who produce seemingly impossible amounts of material in this thriving soap-opera business, but the one who has honestly earned her

⁵ "Hummerts' Super Soaps," *Newsweek*, 23 (January 10, 1944), 80.

⁶ "Goldbergs at Princeton," *Time*, 41 (April 26, 1943), 40.

title of "Queen of Soap Opera" is Irna Phillips, thirty-nine-year-old spinster earning five thousand dollars a week. She writes five soap operas which are equivalent to over twenty-seven novels a year, and she meets every copy deadline on the dot—a genuine literary mill. She writes the episodes a month or six weeks in advance, her only assistants being her two secretaries. In her Lake Shore Drive apartment, she dictates the stories to her secretaries by enacting each line, changing her voice to denote the various characters. The episodes and plots are recorded on large charts which help to maintain the continuity of each of her five stories. Although outstandingly successful as a writer, Miss Phillips broke into radio as an actress. One day her studio told her that script writing was the coming thing in radio for women, and fired her. Baffled, but determined, she dreamed up and sold her first soap opera, "Painted Dreams," which started her off on what seems to be an endless career.⁷

The writers, however, aren't the only ones who are making small fortunes from the soap operas. The actors and the radio stations are making sizable profits too. The radio actors' union scale is twenty-one dollars for each fifteen-minute performance plus added fees for rehearsals and repeat broadcasts. This scale enables an actor who may be making three or four appearances weekly on each of several serials (and many of them do) to earn from three hundred to five hundred dollars per week—not bad for actors whose names their public seldom knows. The weekly production cost of an average fifteen-minute daytime serial is two thousand dollars plus the radio time cost, which comes to about nine thousand dollars for a network hookup of approximately sixty stations.⁸

As the networks expanded to nation-wide hookups, the popularity and in turn the listening audience of the soap operas grew to the present-day figure of some twenty million housewives.⁹ The vast number of people whom these dramatic serials reach and the fundamental emotions with which the dramas deal have inevitably affected American housewives.

Producers, physicians, and psychiatrists have vehemently argued the good and bad physical and psychological effects of the soap operas. The producers' answer to the argument that the soap operas deal with stories that are too sad and too depressing is, "No troubles, no story—the family involved would be just an ordinary, everyday family." They believe that the appeal of soap operas is due to more than just the fact that misery loves company. They presume that most people are more preoccupied with the unhappy aspects of their lives and recollections, and the uncertainty of their futures, than they are with the endurable or, in rare cases, the downright happy *status quo* of the moment. They presuppose that not only the secret

⁷ "Queen of Soap Opera," *Newsweek*, 20 (July 13, 1942), 60.

⁸ Hutchens, *loc. cit.*

⁹ "Daytime Classics," *loc. cit.*

and subconscious mind of womankind, but the conscious mind itself, is packed with more memories of loneliness and frustration and unrealized romantic reverie than with memories of past delight or present fulfillment. Since the women of the daytime audiences are having physical and psychic problems that they themselves cannot understand and are unable to solve, radio presumably takes them into their own problems or, better still, into problems worse than their own, or it takes them away from their problems. It gives the listeners two constant, and frequently simultaneous, choices — participation or escape — and both work.¹⁰

Although Dr. Paul Lazarsfeld, director of the Office of Radio Research at Columbia University, does not seem to consider the mental and physical state of American women to be as serious as the producers have described it to be, he does, however, believe that women get two gratifications from listening to the daytime serials. First, the serials seem to provide an escape, a daydreaming which carries them away from their daily lives. Second, and almost the reverse, women use the stories as a source of guidance in their private lives. About forty per cent of the listeners say that the serials help them solve their own problems. These people have given actual, concrete, and detailed instances in which they have dealt with society more successfully because they have listened to the soap operas.¹¹

The Women's Institute of Audience Reactions has found through its surveys that women have several reasons for listening to soap operas: (1) soap operas make work seem lighter; (2) they provide guidance, helpful philosophy, and inspiration; (3) they supplant reading, saving time and eyes; (4) they provide pleasant escape and take their minds off their personal troubles; (5) they create pleasant anticipation and suspense; (6) they satisfy their natural appetite for entertainment, particularly dramatic entertainment; and (7) they help to dispel loneliness.¹²

Psychiatrists, however, have arrived at different conclusions. There are those who think the potential effect of the daytime serials debilitating. The stupendous amount of wishful thinking, self-pity (through identification with characters whose misfortunes resemble one's own), "phony" philosophy, and neurotic egoism which the women affect after listening to many soap operas is viewed with alarm. Dr. Louis Berg, psychiatrist and formerly physician to the New York Department of Health at Welfare Island, says, "The constant listener to the forty programs studied can become as morbidly fond of his fantasy world as the user of the opium pipe that brings momentary surcease with drugged dreams. . . . The state of anxiety they create is the very same over-anxiety which is the end of all enemy propaganda, for

¹⁰ Max Wylie, "Washboard Weepers," *Harper's Monthly*, 185 (November, 1942), 633.

¹¹ Hutchens, *loc. cit.*

¹² *Ibid.*

it lays the groundwork for civilian panic in emergencies, and saps the productive energies of the afflicted individuals in all their essential efforts."¹³

Wisely, radio producers realize that the success of American radio does not depend on a handful of critical psychiatrists. Radios are in fourteen million American homes where there are no magazines, eight million where there are no cars, thirteen million where there are no telephones, and six million where there are no bathtubs — a total of forty-one million homes of America's poor. "Radio to be free must be radio for all people." Producers know that if all programs were on the entertainment level of the critics, radio would be ruined within a year.¹⁴ Indeed, the producers do know their business. Trouble is apt to be more dramatic than mere pleasant existence is, and well they know it. As in the theatre, tragedy is easier to write and act than is comedy.¹⁵ Knowing their audiences, producers usually make sure that the trouble-makers in the stories are men. Naturally, this goes over big with the women. Soap opera writers constantly use the oldest interest-holding device in playwriting — suspense; Friday's chapter, the last chapter of the week, is designed to leave the listeners in a lather of excited anticipation.

These and many more tricks of the soap opera have earned for the trade such critical catcalls as "unmitigated tripe," "as corny as succotash," "they have scummed the emotional sewers."¹⁶ Nevertheless, as Dr. Matthew N. Chappell of Hooper's Surveys logically points out, "If the amount of sponsor's products sold is any indication, the daytime serial is just about the greatest molder of attitudes, beliefs, ideas, convictions, and behavior of women that we have in our society. . . ."¹⁷

¹³ Hutchens, *loc. cit.*

¹⁴ Wylie, *loc. cit.*

¹⁵ Hutchens, *loc. cit.*

¹⁶ "Scented Soap," *Newsweek*, 22 (July 5, 1943), 110.

¹⁷ "Daytime Classics," *loc. cit.*

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Betrayed

The story is told of a small boy, who, when told of Christ's trial and death, asked, "Where was the Lone Ranger?" To that boy, the Lone Ranger (every Thursday night from 8:30 to 9:00) was a reality; God was much more distant.

— CHARLES HALLAM

The Debt

JOHN L. KLINE

Rhetoric I, Theme 3, 1945-1946

WE WERE A MERRY GROUP THAT NIGHT AS WE RODE the bus into town. We had just finished Pre-Flight, and now we had our first pass to go to Los Angeles. Our squadron had planned a party for us. The band had been hired, and dates had been arranged with extras from some of the film studios.

The early part of the evening was uneventful. We all drank too much. At midnight the band had gone; and, as the bar had closed at eleven, I was beginning to sober up. A very pretty girl was sitting alone at one of the tables, and I walked over to her.

"I lost my date," I said as an introduction.

"Leave her alone. She's with me," came from someone behind us.

I turned and found that it was a kid named Rogers from our squadron.

"That's for her to decide," I replied hotly. I knew then that I had made a mistake, for he lurched at me with both drunken fists swinging wildly. We grappled in what was nothing more than a drunken brawl. The gang jumped in to break us apart; and we became a thrashing, milling mob. Then Rogers broke loose with one arm and sent a big fist crashing against my nose. My head swam, my nose throbbed, and blood spurted all over my wonderful new uniform.

My eyes glared hatred as I screamed, "I'll pay you back, Rogers. Someday I'll pay you back for this!"

The M.P.'s came, and I soon found myself back in the barracks. I couldn't forget Rogers. The more I thought about the incident, the more I hated him.

In a few days we shipped to a new airfield to take Primary Training. My interest in flying soon crowded the hatred back into a dark corner of my mind, where it smouldered unnoticed. Time passed quickly, and we were soon through with Primary and on our way to Basic Training.

I didn't like Basic Training from the first day, for there I again met Rogers. He had the bunk above mine. We ignored and avoided each other as much as possible, but Fate wasn't through with us yet. We drew the same flight instructor and were scheduled for buddy-rides toward the end of our Basic Training.

A week later I came down from a solo hop at five minutes after two. I remember the time, for I was scheduled for a formation ride with my instructor at two. As I was thinking of a good excuse for my tardiness, I noticed a group of students talking excitedly and pointing to a column of

smoke east of the field.

"What happened?" I yelled.

"Crack-up on take-off," someone answered.

"Who was it?" I asked.

"Hetch."

I was stunned. "Hetch!" I gasped. "He was my instructor. I was supposed to fly formation with him this period. Who did he take up?"

"Rogers."

I felt sick. Slowly I trudged back to the barracks. My head was swimming. The kid in the bunk above me was dead, burned to a crisp. His uniform hung beside mine on the rack. I had hated him. He had flown in my place and now he was dead.

Kangas came in and sat down on the opposite bunk. He had been Rogers' best friend.

"You didn't like him, did you?" he said.

I couldn't answer.

"You said once that you owed him something," he persisted.

"Yes," I choked, "I owe him something."

Interlude

Time - not space

BEN LAWLESS

Rhetoric I, Theme 11, 1945-1946

IT WOULD NOT BE RIGHT TO SAY THAT FRANCE IS NOT A beautiful country. Even in the midst of a war that tears at her very vitals, her poplar trees grow straight and tall along the country lanes and her fields are rich with grassy abundance. Yes, France is beautiful this time of year if one takes care not to notice the holes that dot the fertile land like angry boils, and the splintered trees that resemble grotesque monsters among their proud neighbors.

War is a very distinguished visitor. Little towns and hamlets that have remained almost unknown for centuries suddenly, amid the crackling of rifles and crashing of high explosives, become centers of world-wide interest. Their fame still lingers after the fighting has moved on, but they are left dead, their silence broken by the occasional falling of a loosened timber or the crowing of a rooster standing on the crumpled remains of a shattered fence.

An orchard meticulously lined with apple trees is disfigured by the chaotic hand of war into a smoke-filled battleground crowded with men who carry death in their eyes and a great weariness in their hearts. A peaceful

old farmhouse is suddenly transformed into an inferno of noise and color. *Figures*
Long red fingers reach out from its windows and seek the weaving figures, *figures*
half hidden in the tall grass and drifting smoke.

Queer chirping sounds fill the air and men fall lifeless, their eyes open and shocked at the death they have found. Yet other men go on to take the house, and the hill behind the house, and the hill after that one, until they all fade into one vast mountain, unforgettable in their memory but blessedly softened by the thick veil of time. *main types universe*

During a lull in the fighting, the new replacements arrive, their uniforms still smelling fresh and clean, and their equipment stiff with newness. They all, of course, believe the war will be over in a matter of months, and for some of them it will be. For some of them it may last only a few bewildering moments which will be cut short by a small fragment of lead or an explosion's concussion. For others it may last months or years until their minds lose track of time and their stooping bodies resemble robots, obeying automatically and without question the endless succession of orders coming from distant and incomprehensible worlds.

The soldiers, strangely old in the dim-light of the shelter, do not seem to notice newcomers. A man is slumped down in his light pack, industriously cleaning his nails. His bearded chin moves back and forth in his mechanical absorption. Another rests heavily against a wall, staring intently at a trickle of water running down the length of the floor. He says nothing and sees nothing except the thin stream winding erratically before his gaze. In a corner two shadows are thrown into high relief as they touch a match to their cigarettes. Their features are indistinguishable with only their eyes and grimy foreheads showing in the glow from the match. The new men huddle together near the door, shuddering slightly at the sound of the shells overhead. Some stretch out with their helmets under their heads, but for the most part the group remain intact, whispering among themselves. The quiet is oppressive and settles over the thirty men like a heavy blanket. *General*
There is nothing to do but wait. Four long hours of waiting, and then once more the attack will be resumed — four hours in which a lot of thinking is done and many cigarettes are nervously smoked and flipped away — four precious hours that dwindle rapidly, much too rapidly, and set the dreaded minute gradually nearer. *main*

"Got a cigarette, Mac?" one of the new men asks of a man sitting next to him.

"Huh? Yeah, yeah, sure. Here," says the older man rubbing his face. "Here's a light. Been in long?"

"Long enough, I guess. How's it been going out there?"

"Not too bad. You'll be okay. Just stick close and watch your step and you'll get along all right." Then, as an afterthought, he adds, "We oughta be going up pretty soon now." *Effect of con...*

They lean back inhaling the smoke deeply. The still figures in the room stir restlessly.

"You guys been given the dope about what's comin' off up here?" asks the man smoking.

"Sure," answers another of the recruits, crawling over from his position near the door, and then lowering his voice as if the shells outside might hear. "We got it from the lieutenant when he brought us up. Most of us are in the third squad, he says."

"Yeah, that would be right. All except for the new B.A.R. man and his ammo bearer — they go in the first."

At the far end of the room a man inspects his rifle for the second time and absently brushes a bit of mud from the barrel. Others rise painfully to their feet and begin collecting their equipment.

"We should be startin' in a couple of minutes," a voice says listlessly. "Which one of you guys is gonna help me with this load of grenades? I ain't no damn pack horse."

"Wonder where the lieutenant is?" another voice breaks in. "He shoulda been here by now." The speaker peers anxiously through the small door. He, too, is young and disreputable-looking in his clothes of mud and fabric.

"Well," continues the listless voice, "maybe tonight we'll be sleepin' in a nice bed and drinkin' cases of Frog wine." His tones are half ironical and half hopeful.

"Why not ask for a steak dinner and a beautiful babe while you're at it?" interjects a man still hidden in the darkness. "Hell's bells, might as well go whole hog as not."

Then the door is darkened by the frame of the lieutenant as he stoops to enter.

"All set, men?" he asks. "You new guys know where you belong?" A murmur of assent runs through the group. Slowly they start shuffling toward the door.

"Now remember. We take the hedgerow to the right of the road and follow it until we meet resistance. The rest of the company will be on the left, and E company will be to the right. Got it? Okay, let's go."

One by one the men run through the narrow opening and down to the hedgerow. The sun is shining very brightly, and the trees are bending slightly in the wind so that the steeple of the church is visible in the distance, rising magnificently to the sky. The intermittent shelling has ceased altogether. A bird sings a few notes experimentally from its shelter in the trees and then bursts into full melodious song, the echoes of which dance along the little valley out of hearing.

Yes, it is very beautiful here this time of year if one is cautious and does not observe too closely.

Lincoln the Soldier

MORTIMER HITT

Rhetoric II, Theme 12, 1945-1946

ALTHOUGH ABRAHAM LINCOLN SPENT FIFTY-ONE DAYS in the armed service of the United States, in the Black Hawk War, few writers have more than mentioned the fact, probably because of the general lack of authentic accounts and the meager wording of official reports and records of this phase of his career.

Lincoln was yet to be recognized by the world when hostilities broke out. To be sure, he already had made a name for himself in New Salem and Sangamon County. He was noted for his skill in athletics, particularly in wrestling, a sport in which he had held his own against all comers,¹ and he already was making plans for his political career.²

Carl Sandburg suggests that Lincoln enlisted for two reasons: first, he would soon lose his clerking job; and second, "he was running for the legislature; a war record, in any kind of war, would count in politics."³ Whatever may have been his motives, the fact remains that Lincoln, on the twenty-first of April, 1832, enlisted in the militia, which was at that time called into the service of the national government.⁴

Lincoln was chosen captain by the men of his company, in accord with the custom of those days. An interesting account of his election is given by Leonard Swett:

Together with the talk of organizing a company in New Salem, began the talk of making Lincoln captain of it. His characteristics as an athlete had made something of a hero of him. . . . But when the day of organization arrived, a man who had been captain of a real company arrived in his uniform, and assumed the organization of the company. The mode of it was as follows: A line of two was formed by the company, with the parties who intended to be candidates for officers standing in front. The candidate for captain then made a speech to the men, telling them what a gallant man he was, in what wars he had fought, bled and died, and how he was ready again, for the glory of his country to lead them. Then another candidate; and when the speech-making was ended, they commanded those who would vote for this man, or that, to form a line behind their favorite. . . .

When the real captain with his regimentals came and assumed control, Lincoln's heart failed him. He formed in the line with the boys, and after the speech was made they began to form behind the old captain, but the boys seized Lincoln, and pushed him out of line, and began to form behind him . . . and

¹ Leonard Swett, "Mr. Lincoln's Story of His Own Life," *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 463-464.

² Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln; The Prairie Years*, Volume 1, p. 154.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Abraham Lincoln, *Muster Roll of Captain Abraham Lincoln's Company*.

when they counted back he had two more than the other captain, and he became real captain.⁵

His captaincy was the first electoral job he ever held, and in his own words, it was "a success which gave me more pleasure than any I have had since."⁶

That Lincoln was obviously untrained and inexperienced in the ways of the military is evidenced by an account of his drilling his company during the first few days of his service. The men were marching across a field, formed in what today most probably would be termed a "company front," when they came to a gate at the edge of the field. Lincoln, unable to recall the proper command for getting the company into a column, shouted, "This company is dismissed for two minutes, when it will fall in again on the other side of the gate!"⁷

Lincoln's ignorance of drill regulations was not the only thing that caused him trouble. He was arrested and his sword was taken away from him for a day because he broke a general order that forbade the discharge of firearms within a radius of fifty yards from the camp.⁸ It may have been that he was not familiar with the orders or that he was careless in judging his distance. Whatever the reason, he showed clearly that he was not taking his responsibilities very seriously.

Lincoln's company was not amenable to discipline. To his first order he received the reply, "Go to the devil, sir."⁹ The attitudes of the men are described very well by Theodore Pease:

Allow the man whom they had recently honored by electing captain — a man whom they knew thoroughly as no better than themselves — allow such a one to take advantage of his position to direct an action undesirable to them? Incomprehensible! To the recently elected captain this point of view seemed entirely reasonable.¹⁰

Yet another example of the obvious lack of discipline is witnessed by the following incident. One of the men broke into the officers' quarters one night and stole a quantity of liquor which he shared with his comrades. When the army began to march the following morning, the men of Lincoln's company dropped out right and left until only a few remained in the ranks. It was late in the evening before the entire company was together again. As a result of the investigation that followed, Lincoln, though innocent of complicity in or knowledge of the affair, was arrested and forced to undergo the humiliation of wearing a wooden sword for two days.¹¹

This theft may be partly excused on the grounds that the men were not

⁵ Swett, *loc. cit.*

⁶ Roy Edgar Appleman, editor, *Abraham Lincoln From His Own Words and Contemporary Accounts*, p. 2.

⁷ Sandburg, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

⁸ William H. Herndon and Jesse W. Weik, *Herndon's Lincoln*, p. 95.

⁹ Norman Hapgood, *Abraham Lincoln, the Man of the People*, p. 32.

¹⁰ Theodore C. Pease, *The Centennial History of Illinois*, Volume 2, p. 161.

¹¹ Herndon, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-96.

given adequate rations. Lincoln's company, between April 25 and May 17, received the following:

Corn.....	118 bu., 18 pecks	Powder.....	1 keg
Meal.....	10 qts.	Lead.....	50 lbs.
Flour.....	1 bbl., 252 lbs.	Flints.....	265
Bread.....	66 lbs.	Candles.....	20
Salt.....	42 lbs.	Tape.....	144 yds.
Pork.....	1 bbl., 160 lbs.	Buckets.....	50
Whisky.....	10½ gals.	Coffee Boilers.....	7
Sacks.....	48	Tin Pans.....	7
Blankets.....	3	Tin Cups.....	16 ¹²
Soap.....	[Amount unreadable]		

Some authors have mentioned that the men would make expeditions to nearby farms, and return loaded down with sundry items of food. This seems entirely probable, for there were, including Lincoln and his lieutenants, seventy men in the company. One can readily see that the rations listed above would hardly suffice for that number of active men for a period of twenty-three days, let alone the additional ten days of their enlistment during which time no rations were drawn.

The closest contact Lincoln had with the Indians during the war was with an old Indian who had a safe conduct from General Cass and who was captured by some of the men. They were about to kill the aged savage, but Lincoln intervened and saved his life.¹³ There are several accounts of this episode by various reputable authors, but as none of them is documented, it may be apocryphal.

On the twenty-seventh of May, Lincoln's company was demobilized at Ottawa, Illinois, because of the increasing dissatisfaction of the men.¹⁴ Lincoln and several of the other men from his company re-enlisted for a period of twenty days in Captain Elijah Iles' company of Independent Rangers,¹⁵ a company composed of generals, colonels, captains, and other distinguished men of the disbanded army. It was an unique organization — the men had no camp duties and could draw rations as often as they desired; their arms and equipment were of the best. In the final analysis, Lincoln was much better off as a private in this company than he had been as captain of his old organization.¹⁶ Captain Iles' company saw no action whatever during the twenty days of Lincoln's enlistment. In fact, though many historians have written about the war, and more still have written biographies of Lincoln, there is no account of his individual actions during this enlistment.

Lincoln's second period of enlistment ended on the sixteenth of June, and although he re-enlisted the same day, he was not actually mustered into

¹² William Thomas, *Quarter Master's Book*, p. 14.

¹³ Ida M. Tarbell, *The Early Life of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 141.

¹⁴ Isaac Elliott, *Adjutant General's Report*, Volume 9, p. 100.

¹⁵ General Robert Anderson, *Muster Rolls, etc., etc., Black Hawk War 1832*, p. 7.

¹⁶ Tarbell, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

service again until the twentieth.¹⁷ The officer who mustered Lincoln into service the second and third times was Major Robert Anderson, later to be commander of Fort Sumter during the early part of the Civil War. From his own account:

I also mustered Abraham Lincoln twice into the service and once out. He was a member of two of the Independent companies which were not brigaded. The first time I mustered him into the service was at the mouth of the Fox River, May 29, 1832, in Captain Elijah Iles' company. . . . I mustered him out of the service at the "Rapids of the Illinois," June 16, 1832, and in four days afterwards, at the same place, I mustered him into service again in Captain Jacob M. Early's company. . . . Of course I had no recollection of Mr. Lincoln, but when President he reminded me of the fact.¹⁸

Surely if Lincoln had had any of the qualities of a good soldier he would have been remembered by some of the officers, such as General Anderson, and most likely would have been promoted. Many of the accounts build up Lincoln's accomplishments during his military career into proportions far beyond what seem to have been the actual facts as illustrated by surviving primary sources. The very fact that he remained a private during his second and third enlistments speaks for his military abilities.

¹⁷ Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

¹⁸ General Robert Anderson, *Letter dated May 10, 1870 to E. B. Washburn*, p. 4½.

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Journal of George W. Smith
Sept. 8, 1832

Bula Village Government

An executive committee forms the nucleus of the government of a Bula village; at the head of the executive committee is the chief, the eldest brother of the prior chief. Members participating in governmental affairs are his brothers, his sons, and his brother's sons. Each committeeman is concerned with some problems of the village. One is the supervisor of the fishing detail, whose sole duty is to keep the villagers supplied with sea foods. Another is a member in charge of the village vegetable plantations — plantations where taro, tapioca, and other tropical vegetables necessary to the native's life are grown. He is also in charge of the orchards of orange trees, papaya trees, mango trees, and breadfruit trees. Another committeeman operates the native commissary — a store where all incoming business is transacted. There, the natives can buy their kava, a South Sea beverage — a beverage, unlike our alcoholic sort, that affects the sensory nerves of one's limbs. Some members head the export division of the village. This division sells the straw mats manufactured by the natives and the excess fruits grown by the villagers. Usually the chief's eldest son supervises the working hours; he sees that laborers begin work at an early hour and stop before the sun becomes too unbearable. — ROBERT C. MUEHRCKE

Night Patrol

ROBERT E. DAVLIN

Rhetoric I, Theme 4, 1945-1946

ON A COLD, DAMP NIGHT WE HUDDLED TOGETHER IN the cellar of a German house. "Here is your route outlined in red," Major Bowman snapped in his noted militaristic manner. "You will leave from Outpost 26 on an azimuth of 315° at 0215. Your patrol will consist of seven men equipped with five M-3 submachine guns, two M-1 rifles, two hundred and fifty pounds of nitro-cellulose, plus fuse and detonating caps, and a '300' radio.

"Your mission is to reconnoiter the route outlined on this map," Major Bowman continued, "and proceed to this bridge marked A3. According to intelligence reports, this bridge is guarded on the southern flank by a dug-in machine gun emplacement. You are to overcome, if necessary, this emplacement and blow up the southern end of the bridge. Sergeant Collins from Battalion Headquarters will direct the placing of the explosives and the setting of the fuse. After this is done, I suggest that you return over the same route, if possible. Lieutenant Meyers will be in charge of the patrol. All of you men have volunteered for this patrol, and I don't consider it necessary to impress upon you the dangers involved. Are there any questions?"

I asked the major for the radio code, whereupon he drew from his field jacket a typewritten sheet of code. He instructed me to memorize it — then destroy it.

The instructions seemed to be sufficient, and so the major left our cellar and returned to headquarters. It was now 2245 — we had three hours and a half left to wait. We each looked over the large map before us and attempted to fix the important landmarks in our memory. Each knew the importance of the mission and the possibilities of never returning. However, we thought of the promised week of vacation behind the lines, if the invasion were successful, and were all determined that nothing would go wrong.

The men checked their equipment and ammunition to satisfy themselves that everything was in good working condition. Ray Mitchell found his rifle dirty, and energetically began cleaning it thoroughly. I checked my M-3 and allowed it to pass inspection. The radio was checked and no defects were located.

After we were all satisfied that our equipment and ammunition were in good condition, we lay on the floor and attempted to get some much needed rest.

At 0145 we were all awakened and told that we had but thirty minutes before we were due to leave Outpost 26. Hurriedly, we secured our equip-

ment and climbed the cellar steps to the outside.

A blast of cold wind quickly banished the thought of sleep that still lingered about me. The ground was covered with white. The narrow street was bordered by bomb-devastated homes, their jutting scars accentuated by their cloak of snow. The silence of the early morning gave me the feeling that evil eyes were glaring from every corner and crevice that the darkness shadowed.

We made our way down the short street to the end of the village. From then on we walked in single file through a path in a wooded area until we came upon Outpost 26. After giving the password to the guard, we closed in together around Lieutenant Meyers, who gave us the last-minute instructions: "Now remember that our primary mission is to put that bridge in a million pieces, and our secondary mission is to mop up any outposts that we run across along the way. We've got to be damn careful not to cause any disturbance on the way there or we may never see that bridge. Be careful not to make any noise, and don't fire unless it's absolutely necessary. If anything happens to me, Sergeant Deker will take command. Are there any questions?"

Seven figures cloaked in white snow suits began to make their way through the heavy snow toward enemy-held territory. The first scout in the file was a short, brawny Mexican, Pedro Miranda, from El Paso, Texas, who was as quick as he was considered handsome by his numerous female admirers. Miranda had never been known to lead a patrol into a trap. His eyes pierced the darkness as if it were day. His ears were incredibly able to distinguish between friendly and enemy sounds. When his M-3 sputtered, it sputtered death.

Behind Miranda was Lieutenant Meyers, who never shunned a fight, and who was equally eager to begin one. I followed next with the "300" radio on my back, constantly checking with headquarters and giving our position. The other four followed behind me, carrying the explosives. Sergeant Deker brought up the rear.

We had not traveled for more than five hundred yards down a small valley when Miranda gave us a quick signal to "hit the ground." As soon as my face made contact with the soft snow, a machine gun to our left front on the side of a hill began to blaze away at us. The tracers passed over our heads and buried themselves in the snow beyond us. We were spotted. If we moved, we had one chance in a hundred of leaving the valley. If we remained, it would be but a matter of minutes before we would be subjected to mortar fire.

Nervously I reported our predicament to headquarters. I gave the position of the machine gun and pleaded for immediate artillery support. For a period that seemed to cover a life's span, I waited for our first artillery shell. Finally it came, landing about one hundred yards behind the emplacement.

Quickly I radioed the correction, and within a minute two rounds fell about ten yards from the target, obliterating our opposition.

Lieutenant Meyers immediately gave the order to continue to our objective. His intention was to regain lost time while the Germans were still confused. We pushed on down the small valley until we came within sight of an asphalt-covered road, at right angles to our route of advance.

As Miranda neared the wood, he again motioned for all of us to hit the ground. We immediately dropped and lay there wondering for over two minutes before we discovered the cause of the signal. Passing before us, and not more than ten feet from Miranda, was a column of nearly fifty German infantrymen. After we were certain that they were beyond hearing and seeing distance, we quickly crossed the road and continued toward our objective.

After we had covered about a quarter mile without further interference, we saw the steel structure of the bridge loom up before us. According to the intelligence reports that we had received, we were heading directly for the machine gun emplacement guarding the southern end of the bridge. Lieutenant Meyers then gave the order to halt where we were while he and Miranda investigated our position. The remainder of the patrol crouched in the snow about two hundred yards from the southern end of the bridge, while our patrol leader and our scout converged upon the bridge from its flanks. We dropped all of our excess equipment in the snow behind us, as we prepared to lend any needed assistance if it became necessary. The minutes sped on and my heart raced in nervous anticipation. My knees, in their bent position, began to cramp as the muscles strained. I hurriedly mumbled a short prayer and strained my ears to catch the first sound of activity. Out of the still night came a faint groan. I shifted my feet and froze in a rigid position. The safety on a rifle behind me snapped as it was released. Then there was a clearly audible "tap-tap." Recognizing our prearranged signal, we swiftly but quietly gathered our equipment and hurried forward toward the bridge.

Fortune had been kind. Both guards that had been placed upon the machine gun had fallen asleep at their posts. Lieutenant Meyers had insisted that their sleep be permanent. He used eight inches of cold steel on one and Miranda silenced the other in a similar manner.

While we took positions immediately to protect Sergeant Collins as he placed the explosives beneath the steel structure of the bridge, I radioed our progress to headquarters. It was only a matter of a few minutes before the explosives were handed down to Collins, the fuse was set, and the charge was lighted.

We had covered almost five hundred yards of our return route before the sky was suddenly illuminated by a crimson glow. As I turned to look back, the blast of the explosion shook the ground. The men lengthened their stride in their hurried return to the safety of our lines.

Providence guided our footsteps and we soon reached Outpost 26. I breathed more easily as I radioed, "Love birds returned O. P. 26. Mission accomplished. Warm up the coffee. Will report immediately. Over." A voice replied, "Your roost is ready and your coffee is hot. Truck on in. Roger and out."

Chowringhee Road

WILLIS MASEMORE

Sensory, 1946

Rhetoric I, Theme 2, 1945-1946

I REMEMBER THE CLATTERING CLAMOR OF TRAM CARS; the sweaty, panting bodies of half naked rickshaw boys, racing for countless destinations; the rumble of hundreds of voices, all babbling at once in a tongue foreign to my ear; massive oxen struggling with their heavy burden through the street; bicycles darting in and out; the glint of a silver hub and a yellow axle on an open Victoria; and a few ancient motor cars, converted to charcoal, chugging laboriously along.

Nor will I forget a half-starved beggar huddled at the foot of a monument to the grandeur of his sovereign; a child yanking my pants leg and screaming for a one or two anna piece; a beautiful Hindu woman, veiled and clad in a pure white sari; a sea of big black umbrellas sheltering the teeming masses from the scorching noonday sun; a policeman, impressive in his red fez, directing the hopelessly snarled up traffic; shiny black foreheads, each adorned with a jewel or daubed with a red, white, or green dot; merchants barking their wares and tempting the unsuspecting into the dark interiors of their dismal little shops; a barber plying his art by the curbstone; mourners carrying their dead to be burned; and many arms covered with heavy silver bracelets of strange and intricate design.

There, too, were the smells — some delightful, some repugnant, some strong, and others tantalizingly faint. There was the tangy odor of coffee being sold in the street; of incense, fish, fresh fruit, little cakes on a griddle, and a sweetish stuff that was sold on dark green leaves; the smell of heat and crowded people; of tepid sewer water standing in an open main; of dung from the sacred cows; the brittle mustiness of antique ivory; the dry, dusty smell of baskets for sale in an old bazaar; the moist watermelon odor of a cobra being charmed by its master; and at night the very faint odor of suspense — perhaps mystery — of the darkness itself.

Yes, to me Chowringhee Road is a conglomeration of vivid details, a marvelous montage of sights and sounds and smells. To the natives of Calcutta, Chowringhee is just another street — a daily scene in their daily lives.

Will Russia Cooperate?

THOMAS S. POOL

Rhetoric II, Semester Examination, Summer 1946

FROM ALL THAT APPEARS IN OUR NEWSPAPERS THESE days, the average citizen concludes that Russia has no desire to co-operate with the other world powers. Some of our more enlightened citizens consider that it is only a matter of time before Russia's uncooperative attitude will plunge the world into a third great war.

I am not pro-Russian, I do not agree with Russian political philosophies, and I would not like to live with the Russians or have them live with me. I am not, however, of the opinion that the Western powers are wise, or, in many cases even justified, in the attitude with which they have gone into their relations with Russia.

The Western powers have pursued a policy of isolation or hostility toward Russia ever since the days of the Red Revolution in 1917. They gave active and non-active support to the Tsarist White Russians and after the close of World War I gave support to Polish aggression. At this time the Russians were losing land to the Western powers and getting nothing in return but scorn. Russia was not even invited to the conferences at Paris and Versailles, nor was she invited into the League.

Finally, with the threat of Hitler and Mussolini in the middle thirties, the Western powers sought the friendship of Russia. They got it. The business before the League at that time was that of disarmament. All the powers of the righteous League were squabbling over the extent to which they might be armed. Russia came into these meetings with a plan that she was prepared to support and abide by. It provided for almost total disarmament of all the powers. "Out of the question, of course! Who wants to disarm?"

On every move that the U.S.S.R. has made since her creation, she has been barred by a jealous England and a fearful France. She has had to yield to the power politics of England, France, and the United States. She has simply come into her own since the war. She is in a position to overpower the "strong men" of the capitals of the world who were such "men of action" all through the past decade.

The strong men, our vociferous leaders, are getting what they have asked for for the past twenty years. They now try to excuse themselves to us with cries of "Red peril," "aggression," "Communist threat," and "Russia will NOT COOPERATE."

An Open Letter

THEODORE McCARTY

Rhetoric II, Theme 9, 1945-1946

May 17, 1946

Mr. JOHN STELLE, National Commander
American Legion

DEAR SIR:

As commander of the American Legion, you are naturally interested in the welfare of all veterans; therefore, I am writing you my opinion on the proposed payment of a cash bonus for World War II servicemen.

The bonus payment would be harmful rather than helpful to most veterans, and I think you will agree that anything which destroys the initiative, ability, and self-confidence of the young men of America is detrimental to the future welfare of our country.

For the past several months, the American Legion has been backing the proposal of a bonus for veterans of World War II. Many politicians and citizens favor this bonus, but others, like myself, disapprove of such a payment. The politicians realize that their jobs depend upon the voters, and since many of the voters are veterans, one easily understands why such emphasis is placed on obtaining their good will by handing them a cash payment. A great majority of the veterans favor this bonus because they are selfish or shortsighted. They seem to think that they are entitled to have everything they desire just because they are ex-servicemen. This selfish attitude will cause them to vote for any politician who favors excessive benefits for the servicemen.

When the Selective Service Act was passed, I, like thousands of other men, was not too pleased with the idea of spending a year in the army. We went into service because we had to, and we reluctantly became a part of the army. When war was declared, our attitudes changed from reluctance to complete agreement that it was the job of every able-bodied citizen to do his part for Uncle Sam. This idea of doing one's part has aroused comments and criticisms from many veterans. Obviously all of us could not stay in this country; neither could all of us go overseas. Many people who wanted to go abroad had to stay here, and many who wanted to stay had to go overseas. There are people, both in the service and out of it, who did not do their full share towards winning the war, but the majority of the people did all they could to bring about our victory.

I spent two and one-half years overseas and one year in combat as an infantryman. I do not think I exaggerate or brag when I say that I performed my duty as far as I was able. I bought bonds and still have them. Several

hundred thousand other servicemen did the same thing. While I was overseas many of my friends worked hard and faithfully without a vacation in order to provide the materials of war. It would appear that most servicemen and civilians fulfilled an obligation to their country by doing as much as they were capable of doing. If both groups did their duty, why then should veterans feel that they are entitled to a bonus? Why shouldn't civilians be entitled to a bonus? Clearly civilian workers must have done their job well or we couldn't have had the materials of war. Many veterans overlook the fact that civilians performed their duty as well as the front-line soldier.

Most veterans feel that civilians made enormous sums of money during the war. Wages were high, but the cost of living was also high, a fact which many people overlook. The average civilian worker was never paid an exorbitant salary. It is true many skilled workers did make a high weekly wage, but those workers were employed at that job for several years to enable them to have that skill. The hourly wage didn't increase much, but the overtime hours brought an added income.

The United States serviceman was among the world's highest paid. Though he did not receive a high weekly wage, he received free clothing; free food, which was the best in this country; free medical and dental care, which many men would otherwise never have obtained; a place to live; and an insurance policy which provided the maximum of protection for a minimum of cost.

While in the army, I suffered many hardships, but I do not feel that I am entitled to anything extra in the way of a bonus. Like millions of others, I was merely performing a necessary job. It was our duty to fight for our country as much as it was the duty of the defense worker to provide our weapons and equipment of war. It is true, the defense worker continued in his profession while our life in the service interrupted our normal occupation, but I do not think a flat bonus payment to each veteran will pay for the interruption of his career, or for the time he spent away from home, or for the hardships he endured, or for the loss of limbs and health. In recognition of the veterans' needs and welfare the United States Government has passed the G. I. Bill in an attempt to restore the serviceman to his normal way of life as justly and quickly as possible. This bill enables the veteran to secure an education to fit him for a position in the future. If it weren't for this legislation, thousands of men would not be attending the universities today. I think that four years of schooling should be enough bonus for anyone. For those veterans who do not attend school, on-the-job instruction enables them to learn a trade while receiving pay equal to the skilled craftsman's. If the veteran doesn't want either of these benefits, he may secure his old job with full seniority guaranteed him. When a civilian stopped working, his seniority stopped. The government is considering a housing bill to enable

veterans to purchase low-cost homes and also a terminal-leave bill for enlisted veterans.

From any viewpoint, it would appear that the veteran has had his share of benefits, but the State of Illinois proposes to pay a cash bonus to every veteran.

The attitude of many veterans is this: "Give me all that I can get as long as it doesn't cost me anything." Actually, this proposed bonus is charity or an indirect method of begging. After the state pays the bonus and the veterans have spent the money, the veterans will then start a campaign for a national bonus. The more people receive, the more they expect. The proposed bonus would give many veterans the idea of getting something for nothing. It would create a desire to receive something extra without doing anything to earn it.

Many veterans do not realize who pays for a bonus. The answer is the people. Since veterans are citizens, they will help to pay for any bonus they receive. Each time a person buys cigarettes or attends a movie, he will be helping to pay for this bonus. The people of this nation are taxed enough already. The national debt now amounts to \$1,985 per person. Instead of increasing this tax load, we should be finding ways to lower taxes and to eliminate our debt.

A cash bonus will not only increase the public debt, but it will decrease the moral standards of many young men; therefore, I urge you to consider seriously the proposed bonus, and to publicize completely the economic significance of such a payment, not only for the veteran, but for the whole nation. With the facilities of your great organization at your disposal, it would be a worthy service to our country if you plan a program to educate the veteran to the full consequences of a bonus payment.

Yours truly,

THEODORE McCARTY

Confusion: Army Style

Army confusion is totally different from the ordinary type such as might result in a bargain sale of women's nylon stockings where each unabashed woman participating in the free-for-all is doing her little bit in adding to the general, over-all melee. It is, rather, confusion instigated by a confused person. It is, hurry up and wait; pack up, we won't be leaving for months; and take-off, the mission is cancelled. It is doing things, just anything, and then undoing them so that they can be done again. It is a nightmare of disorganization, ambiguous orders, and unpleasanties all thrown together. — ROBERT F. KRUG

Rhet as Writ

She has no friends or near relatives and doesn't attempt to make any.

. . . .

Mexico should have some form of civilized industry but not to the extent of hindering the nativity of its human being.

. . . .

The two vices which are predominant in the colony are gambling and immortality.

. . . .

Conway ended up in a Chinese missionary suffering from amnesia.

. . . .

When the time came that I could no longer go to camp as a camper, I returned as a counsellor. In most cases, it was in the capacity of craft director, and so I had a few years of experience in teaching the fascinating trick of making things yourself behind me.

. . . .

The U. S. has a larger area per square mile than England.

. . . .

He still hated women. In his opinion, they were nothing but scheming little wrenches.

. . . .

I was rejected because of the loss of the two teeth over which I had no control.

. . . .

The noun "language," pronounced lang' gwij, is derived from a mixture of Old French, Latin, and Methodist Episcopal words meaning "tongue." Language in Old French and Methodist Episcopal was spelled "language," and in Modern French, "langue."

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